

was first introduced a quarter century ago. And manufacturers will be able to meet these new standards while still offering the kinds of models popular with consumers today.

I want to say a special word of appreciation for all those that worked with EPA in developing this new strategy. I thank the auto and the oil industries, the States, the environmental communities, the leading public health experts. The issues were not always easy, to put it mildly. But working together we have, I am convinced, come to solutions that are best for our Nation's health and for our Nation's economy. We will continue to work together also—and this is very important—to create cleaner diesel fuel, our next big challenge in this area. And I will do all I can to expand our efforts with the auto industry, which have already borne a lot of fruit, in the same spirit of collaboration to provide our consumers with vehicles that are not just less polluting but also far more fuel efficient. *[Applause]* Yes, you can clap for that. It won't be long until you'll be amazed what will be available on the market on that score.

It seems impossible to believe, but in just 10 days, we will close out a century of remarkable progress on a high note, and we will begin a new millennium. We will have new opportunities and new challenges. We, all of us, I think, wonder what the future holds for our children. As we unravel the mysteries of the human gene and search the outer reaches of black holes in the universe, there's no telling what's just around the turn in the new century. We are

very fortunate that we end the century and begin the millennium with, really, an unprecedented level of economic prosperity and social progress and national self-confidence, with the absence of overwhelming internal crisis or external threat. This combination of conditions has not existed before, at least in my lifetime.

But I would argue to all of you that because of the good times, we have a peculiar responsibility to think about the big long-term issues that will frame the lives that we dream for our children. And we have an opportunity to shape the future in a way that perhaps no generation before us has ever had. One of the things that we ought to do first is to make sure as many children as possible have a full future.

You know, any of us who have ever been in a hospital delivery room know that when a baby comes into the world, the first thing that's done is to make sure the infant can draw its first breath. As we embark on a new millennium, among all of our other responsibilities, surely it is our sacred obligation to ensure that each and every child, from the first breath on, will be drawing the cleanest, purest, healthiest air we can provide. Today's a big step in the right direction, and I thank all of you who have been involved in it.

Thank you very much.

NOTE: The President spoke at 12:10 p.m. in the multipurpose room at Maury Elementary School. In his remarks, he referred to Maury Elementary School nurse Gloria Hackman.

## Statement on Proposed Gun Control Legislation

*December 21, 1999*

Today Senator Schumer released an important new report that shows us how vital it is for us to change the way the gun industry does business. The report contains more evidence that a very small proportion of gun dealers is linked to a very high proportion of crime guns traced by police. It also shows that most of the guns that end up in the hands of criminals first pass through a middleman, for instance, a straw purchaser or an illegal gun trafficker. That is why I have pushed Congress to pass commonsense gun measures to crack down on

traffickers who supply guns to criminals. And that is why my administration has begun to engage the gun industry on a range of steps the industry itself can take.

Thanks to the Brady law, our increased support for State and local law enforcement, and other steps we've taken, gun violence in America is down. But no one believes it is down far enough. The message of today's report is simple: It's time for Congress and the gun industry to help clamp down on bad dealers and stem the flow of guns to criminals. It's time for Congress

and the gun industry to help us make our country safer. I hope this report will help push that cause forward.

## Message on the Observance of Christmas, 1999

*December 21, 1999*

Warm greetings to everyone celebrating Christmas.

Saint Matthew's Gospel tells us that, on the first Christmas 2000 years ago, a bright star shone vividly in the eastern sky, heralding the birth of Jesus and the beginning of His hallowed mission as teacher, healer, servant, and savior. Jesus' birth in poverty proclaimed the intrinsic dignity and brotherhood of all humanity, and His luminous teachings have brought hope and joy to generations of believers. Today, as the world stands at the dawn of a new millennium, His timeless message of God's enduring and unconditional love for each and every person continues to strengthen and inspire us.

During this blessed season and the Jubilee Year it inaugurates, let us share the gift of God's love by giving of ourselves and by sharing generously with those in need. Let us reach out to those who are different from us, yet one in the human family, by living the profound and universal lesson Jesus taught us: that we are

to love our neighbors as ourselves. Let us, like Jesus, become true peacemakers, bringing the gift of peace to our homes, our schools, our communities, and our nation. And let us continue to reach out when and where we can to give new hope to the most impoverished and to help resolve conflicts, both ancient and new, in regions around the world.

Love, peace, joy, hope—so many beautiful words are woven through our Christmas songs and prayers and traditions. As we celebrate this last Christmas of the 20th century, let us resolve to build a future where all people learn to love one another and to live together in harmony; where our children know true joy; and where our hopes for peace, freedom, and prosperity for all are finally realized.

Hillary joins me in extending best wishes for a wonderful Christmas celebration and every happiness in the new year.

BILL CLINTON

## Radio Remarks for the 1999 Walt Disney World Holiday Celebration

*November 29, 1999*

Hello, this is President Bill Clinton. I'm sure everyone around the world appreciates how special this year's holiday celebration is. We're about to enter a new millennium, an era of tremendous promise and opportunity. There is no better time than now to reflect on our hopes and dreams and the gifts we want to leave for the future. We can all do something to make the world a better place.

Hillary, Chelsea, and I want to wish everyone listening the happiest of holidays. And as we

celebrate the future, it is our hope that your dreams for the new millennium will come true.

NOTE: The President's remarks were recorded at approximately 10 a.m. in the Roosevelt Room at the White House for later broadcast. The transcript was released by the Office of the Press Secretary on December 22. A tape was not available for verification of the content of these remarks.